

Special Education Certification in AZ:

*New proposals, nationwide
trends, and current research*

Arizona Department of Education



Current Certification in AZ

- Cross-categorical
- **Hearing Impaired**
- Severely and Profoundly Disabled
- **Visually Impaired**
- Emotional Disability
- Learning Disability
- Mental Retardation
- Orthopedic Impairments or Other Health Impairments (OI/OHI)

What Does Research Tell Us?

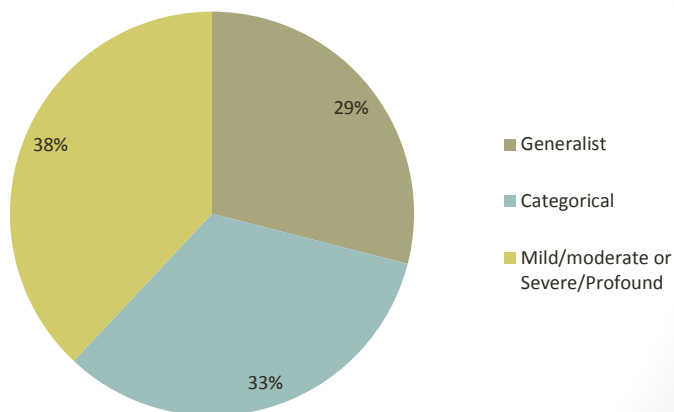
- 1970's
 - Categorical orientation dominated special education
- 1977
 - CEC adopted noncategorical standards (Birch & Reynolds, 1982).
- In the early 80's
 - A noncategorical approach emerged (Hallahan & Kauffman, 1977).
- 1990's
 - Push for inclusion

Shift from categorical to noncategorical/integrated

(Bownell, Sindelar, Kiely, & Danielson, 2010).

National Certification Trends

-California Comprehensive Center



States Offering Mild/Moderate and Severe/Profound

- Arkansas
- California
- Delaware
- Kansas
- Louisiana
- Maine
- Maryland
- Massachusetts
- Mississippi
- Missouri
- New Hampshire
- North Carolina
- Ohio
- Oklahoma
- Oregon
- Rhode Island
- Texas
- Utah

So, Why is AZ Proposing Changes in Current Certification?

- Alignment with research and national trends
- Heighten reciprocity=higher recruitment
- Better retention since courses are more rigorous, focused, and consistent across universities and colleges
- Easier to hire in rural areas
- Easier to be certified across the continuum
- Concerns from the field regarding teacher placement, lack of knowledge, and inconsistency in training

Development of Proposals for New Certifications

- Stakeholder group formed August 2012
- 9 meetings until final decision
- Started as ID across the continuum
- Consistent with language used by CEC and IDEA
- Based on trend data and research

Current Certification Requirement in AZ

- **21 semester hours of special education courses:**
 - Survey of exceptional students;
 - Teaching methodologies and strategies for students with disabilities;
 - Foundations courses
 - Diagnosis and assessment
 - Electives

Plus 8 semester hours of practicum

Thoughts?

Mild-Moderate Coursework

foundational courses

- **Foundations of special education** (IDEA disability categories and characteristics, instructional and behavioral strategies, history of disability laws, current state and federal legislation, special education processes including MET, IEPs, transition teams and plans, AT)
- **Legal aspects** (due process, current state and federal legislation, transition, IEP process, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, NCLB, IDEA, and ethical practices)
- **Effective Collaboration and Communication Practices** (technology, co-teaching, conflict resolution, supervision; collaboration between professionals, parents/families/guardians from diverse backgrounds, and community resources and agencies)
- **Assessment and eligibility** (RTI, formative, normative, summative, MET, FBA and BIPS, progress monitoring, data analysis for making data-based decisions for service delivery, accommodations, modifications, IEP goals, LRE, transition development, grading)

Mild-Moderate Coursework

specialization courses

- **Research-based instruction-Math** (UDL, DI in math, assistive technology, technology)
- **Research-based instruction- ELA** (UDL, DI in reading and writing, differentiation, assistive technology, technology)
- **Classroom Management and Behavior Analysis** (learning and behavior strategies, RtI, FBA, BIP, PBIS, adaptive behavior, social/emotional growth, self-advocacy, student engagement)
- **Language Development and Disorders** (augmentative communication, atypical and typical language development, speech and language disorders, implications and adaptations for learners, AT and AC)

Populations One Can Teach

- High incidence populations including:
 - Intellectual Disability (**ID**)
 - Traumatic Brain Injury (**TBI**)
 - Emotional Disability (**ED**)
 - Orthopedic Impairment or Other Health Impairment (**OI/OHI**)
 - Developmental Delay (**DD**)
 - Specific Learning Disability (**SLD**)
 - Autism (**ASD**)

Severe-Profound Coursework *foundational courses*

- **Assessment and eligibility** (RTI, formative, normative, summative, MET, FBA and BIPS, progress monitoring, data analysis for making data-based decisions for service delivery, accommodations, modifications, IEP goals, LRE, transition development, grading)
- **Foundations of low incidence disabilities** (developmental and medical aspects, legal foundations, legal requirements or IEPs and transition plans, AT)
- **Legal aspects** (due process, current state and federal legislation, transition, IEP process, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, NCLB, IDEA, and ethical practices)
- **Effective Collaboration and Communication Practices** (technology, co-teaching, conflict resolution, supervision; collaboration between professionals, parents/families/guardians from diverse backgrounds, and community resources and agencies, AT)

Severe-Profound Coursework *specialization courses*

- **Classroom management and behavior analysis** (PBIS, IEP, ESY, RtI, FBA, BIP, social skills, functional skills, self-advocacy, transition planning, adaptive behavior, social/emotional growth, , student engagement)
- **Adaptive communication** (Augmentative communication, AT, devices, assessments, appropriate implementation)
- **Instructional strategies across the curriculum** (task analysis, research-based instruction, methods and modification, AZCCS, AT, assessment)

Populations One Can Teach

- Low incidence populations.
- Classroom comprised of at least 1 of the following:
 - Multiple Disability (**MD**)
 - Autism (**ASD**)
 - Traumatic Brain Injury (**TBI**)
 - Orthopedic Impairment (**OI**)
 - Significant Developmental Delay (**SDD**)
 - Deaf-blindness (**D-B**)

Comparison old vs. new certification requirements

Old	New
Not prescriptive	Prescriptive
21 semester hours + 8 of practicum	**37 semester hours + 8 of practicum
Challenging to be certified in various disabilities	Feasible to be certified across disability categories and across the spectrum

Myths

ADE is getting rid of cross-cat certification.

Institutes of Higher Education will have to completely revamp their current programs right away.

Students with ED will be served under mild-moderate AND severe/profound.

The new certification proposals will limit candidates' options and will make hiring more difficult.

Recruiting teacher candidates from out of state would be more difficult with these changes.

The new certificate would increase the amount of coursework candidates would have to take.

Current certification holders will have a window of time to take all of the required coursework and get re-certified.

References

- Birch J.W., & Reynolds, M.C. (1982). Special education as a profession. *Exceptional Education Quarterly*, 2(4), 1-13.
- Bownell, M.T., Sindelar, P.T., Kiely, M.T., & Danielson, L.C. (2010). Special education teacher quality and preparation: Exposing foundations, constructing a new model. *Exceptional Children*, 76(3), 357-377.
- Hallahan, D.P., & Kauffman, J.M. (1977). Labels, categories, behaviors: ED, LD and EMR reconsidered. *The Journal of Special Education*, 11, 139-149.